

METHODS AND PROBLEMS IN THE TEACHING OF PRONUNSIATION

Бул статья студенттерди англис тилин туура сүйлөөгө үйрөтүүнү, студенттерде кандай кыйынчылыктар бар экендигин билүүнү жана сүйлөөнүн кандай ыкмалары студенттерге жардам берээрин камтыйт.

В статье рассмотрено преподавание правильного произношения английского языка, проблемы, встречающиеся у студентов при изучении английского языка. Рассматриваемые методы помогут студентам, чтобы улучшить их произношение.

This article considers how to teach students in correct pronunciation of English language, which problems students have with their pronunciation, which methods of pronunciation will help to students to improve their pronunciation.

This article describes the main essence of teaching pronunciation and goal of the using at universities, institutions and in the senior groups of the secondary school. Teaching pronunciation is a powerful approach for helping students to improve their speech and to acquire accurate pronunciation. As far as we know right pronunciation leads students speak correctly and use of right pronunciation develops students listening, hearing, and speaking, if student speaks correctly he will be feel self-confidence and he won't be shy from other students with his pronunciation. Wrong pronunciation leads to misunderstanding. In order to acquire good pronunciation first to teach sounds, vowels, and consonants it improves substantially. Because sounds play a great role in pronunciation. Also using proverbs, tongue twisters, and rhymes, it develops student's pronunciation. Because in order to get good pronunciation, I would like to teach students, in practical way of pronunciation. The value of using proverbs, tongue twisters, rhymes lie in the fact it can provide immediate feedback with the teacher and to acquire accurate pronunciation when speaking spontaneously.

Pronunciation plays a great role in communication. Pronunciation is a key element of the learning of oral skills in a second language. Pronunciation has often viewed as a skill in second language learning that is most resistant to improvement; therefore the least useful to teach student's pronunciation of a foreign language is influenced by their mother tongue. Learning pronunciation of English means learning how to pronounce the individual sound and consonant sound. As far as we know the basis of all languages- is a sound. Spoken languages begin with sounds. In order to make oneself intelligible and to understand the spoken language one must have a good working knowledge of the pronunciation of that language.

The problem of teaching pronunciation

We are comfortable teaching reading, writing, listening and to a degree oral skills, but when it comes to pronunciation we often lack the basic knowledge of articulatory phonetics.

There is also tendency for us to focus on production affecting our learners. Most research however, shows clearly that the problem is more likely to be reception – what you don't hear, you can't say. Moreover, if the “English” sound is not clearly received, the brain of the learners convert it into the close sound in their own language. Thus the dental English fricative /θ/ in “those”, becomes converted by speakers into the dentalised /d/, producing “dose” as this is what the speaker hears. Given this reality, it would seem logical to place a heavy emphasis on listening (reception) as a way into realizing appropriate pronunciation (production).

But we must notice that Native-like pronunciation is difficult for most adult learners to achieve in a second language. The achievement of it requires not only skilled teaching but also a high level of internal motivation on the part of the student. Most adults are satisfied with reasonably intelligible speech in the second language and this is an acceptable goal for the ESL teacher. The first goal should be to give assistance during the regular speaking lesson to students who are having difficulty with particular sounds. The particular sounds that students will find difficult will differ for different language backgrounds.

Good pronunciation is closely linked with clear oral communication; therefore, it is advisable to place students in a meaningful and contextual situation, rather than present them with a series of isolated sentences. In practicing the phoneme /ai/, for example, students are made to repeat sentences like “Mike tried five times to get the prize”. “Five times five is twenty-five”. Though these isolated sentences have a high concentration of the sound to be practiced, they are not sentences frequently used in everyday conversation. The students who are trained in this way tend to make more pronunciation errors when speaking spontaneously. What is more, such a pronunciation class is not motivating. The students sit passively and are bored by the parrot-like repeating task. In order to improve the situation, the following strategies quite stimulating.

In selecting or designing materials, to pay special attention to those, which contain not only a sufficient concentration of the sound to be practiced, but short dialogues, pair word, or other contextual practices as well. The students first learn stress accompanies by basic intonation in meaningful sentences; then work on the difficult sounds. This meaningful practice has the advantage of making the students aware of the stress and intonation patterns from the beginning. As the course proceeds, to choose several articles of various styles from the student textbooks to use as models for practicing linking, rhythm, stress, or intonation. Students feel that the pronunciation class is relevant to their regular course work. Thus, they become active participants in their pair group work, applying the phonetic rules they have learned to the actual practice. Through these meaningful and contextual activities the students can learn to speak both intelligibly and accurately.

Using songs, games, and tongue twisters can increase student motivation in a pronunciation class: motivation is a highly significant factor in pronunciation. The more motivated student is to improve his speech, the more rewarding the teaching will be. In choosing songs, the first consideration is that they

should be simple enough for students to practice stress and rhythm as well as individual sounds. In teaching the difficult phoneme /ei/, for example, the song *This is the way*:

*This is the way we wash our face,
Wash our face, wash our face,
This the 'way we' wash our' face
At' seven o'clock in the' morning.*

Eventually, the songs helps the students pronounce the phoneme /ei/ and allows the weaker ones to feel a real sense of achievement when they are able to sing it.

Using game in a pronunciation class can also increase student motivation. Pronunciation and sound discrimination games can make practice in this area lively and entertaining. The game Phonetic guessing for practicing the uses of intonation. This game proved to be very stimulating.

Tongue twisters are particularly useful for students who have unique pronunciation problems. Before to teach the students the English /l/ and /n/, first ask them to make clear distinction between the Chinese “l” and “n”, then design a contrastive exercise of rapidly repeating the words *like light night light; night light night...*

The result has proven to be very effective.

The game is a good way to know the difference between vowel sounds and consonant sounds; the difference between one sound and two sounds, and young learners particularly enjoy it.

For example: to choose ten words that students already know. It is important that they are familiar words. Choose four or five other familiar words as examples. Demonstrate on the board that the word ‘cat’, for example, can be written CVC, Consonant sound, Vowel sound, and Consonant sound. This is very example but there are more difficult ones. ‘Caught’ is CVC, ‘through’ is CCV, ‘breakfast’ is CCVCCVCC, ‘brother’ is CCVCV, ‘hour’ is VV, and ‘carrot’ is CVCVC.

Ask students to do the same with the ten words you have chosen. To ask them to do this by looking and writing, by looking, listening and writing, by listening, saying and writing whichever combination seems valuable and necessary.

To check student’s answers and explain any difficulties.

This activity will clarify many points for students. For example, that ‘br’ is two sounds but ‘th’ is one, final ‘er’ is one and ‘rr’ is one. It will show that ‘h’ is sometimes silent and sometimes not and that ‘r’ is silent. Note that diphthongs count as one vowel sound. This activity is good preparation for learning phonemes because it focuses on sounds and not letters.

Also begin by explaining what a homophone is. We can give examples in student’s own language and in English, emphasizing that the words have the same sound, but not the same spelling or meaning. Obviously, homophones are written with exactly the same phonemic symbols. Show students a list of words, some homophones, some not and ask them to identify the homophones. Choose ten words according to the level of the students. ‘See’ and ‘sea’ are a lot easier than ‘sword’ and ‘soared’. If students think that ‘caught’ and ‘court’ are not homophones or that ‘pull’ and ‘pool’ are homophones, this will

give us valuable information about how students are thinking about English phonology. This activity is best done in pairs and groups because students do not necessarily agree and the discussion can be useful.

The learner's motivation and concern for good pronunciation.

The factor is greatest importance in pronunciation instruction: if the learner's motivation to improve is strong and if the investment of time and effort is great, there will be improvement.

What exactly in pronunciation features that the ESL teacher should cover?

First, you should consider what type of ESL/EFL course you are teaching. Is it four skills, oral communication, exclusively pronunciation, or something else? The extent of pronunciation instruction will vary according to the time available and the focus of the course.

The attention paid to structured learning of pronunciation rules depend both on the level of the student and on the amount of time available for pronunciation in the course. It should be stressed that pronunciation can and should be taught at every level of ESL instruction. The applicability and simplicity of certain general rules offers the beginning learner in particular a welcome pattern and aid. Moreover, pronunciation instruction lends to integration with almost any type of activity.

For a course focusing on pronunciation at a more advanced level, it is useful to present a diagram of the organs of speech, the phonetic alphabet, the consonant chart, and the vowel chart. It would be quite difficult to teach pronunciation very thoroughly without a common system of transcription. As students are often so much more influenced by spelling than by actual aural input, they are typically amazed at phonetic transcriptions. The organs of speech diagram illustrate the place of articulation for both consonants and vowels, and although not all students or sounds respond well to such articulator explanations, it can be quite productive for others. In addition to place of articulation, the consonant chart allows us to address the manner of articulation and voicing. Vowels, on the other hand, are elusive for several reasons: the articulation is generally not visible, the sound/spelling correspondence for vowels is so much more varied than for consonants, and vowel quality varies a great from dialect to dialect. Nonetheless, the vowel chart is an aid in differentiating the sounds, and the use of colors to represent the vowels can bypass the sound/spelling difficulties.

Listening comprehension exercises, which involve rapid speech, will be incomprehensible to learners who have no understanding of the rules for reduced speech and blending. In fact, better listening comprehension is a good reason for teaching pronunciation rules to our student's right from the start.

Feedback and Correction

One of the most important issues in pronunciation instruction is how to give effective feedback. Some of the techniques discussed under "Practice" provide opportunities for feedback by the teacher, tutor, peers, and the students themselves. The question is what aspects of a student's pronunciation to correct and how to do this successfully.

Who is to provide the feedback students needed? Self-correction is the most valuable since it encourages the student to be autonomous. Yet how we guide students to self-correct? Using audio or videotape, we can have them both locate and correct errors. This is done most effectively with a self-evaluation form to be filled out when relistening to the tape. Peer feedback is also important

because students listening another student's errors will be developing their own monitor and listening awareness. Students may be grouped with peer who have similar difficulties and are tuned into the same errors in their own speech or with peers who have different problems. However, the most successful peer teaching often occurs between students of the same language background, one of whom has mastered the particular feature. Peers may be used as providers of feedback of any oral performance, especially speeches, interviews, debates, or role-plays. The type of evaluation sheet may differ from activity to activity, but students can be quite adept at giving constructive feedback, even if it consists only of naming one area that needs improvement.

Accurate pronunciation of sounds: this is really two problems, one of ability and one of knowledge. Students first need to learn to pronounce as many of the sounds of English as possible accurately. The particular sounds with which students will have difficulty depend to a large extent on student's first language, but there are some sounds in English such as the "th" sounds in "think" and "this", or the short vowels in "head", "hit", and "put" which are difficult for students from many language backgrounds. The second problem is making sure that students know what sounds they should pronounce in a given word. Common pronunciation problems include omitting sounds, adding extra ones, or simply pronouncing the wrong sound.

Syllable stress: Unlike many other languages, English requires that one syllable in each word be stressed more than others. The importance of putting the stress on the right syllable in English cannot be underestimated; putting the stress on the wrong syllable is more likely to make a word unintelligible than is mispronouncing one of its sounds. For many students who are especially hard to understand, misplaced syllable stress is the main problem.

The ideal approach to student pronunciation problems is to work individually with each student, listening for problems, explaining the proper pronunciation(intonation, etc.), modeling correct pronunciation, and listening to the student practice. However, this is usually not possible because of time limitations and class size, so the discussion below will focus on approaches, which can be used with a class.

Listening and pronunciation: Unless you are fortunate enough to have very small classes, it will be difficult to give much individual attention to students' pronunciation. Students must therefore learn to rely on their ears to tell them whether their pronunciation approximates that of native speaker models. However, many students are not in the habit of listening carefully before attempting to repeat. In fact, they have often been trained for years to immediately repeat whatever the teacher says, no matter how vague their impression is of the jumble of sounds they are trying to reproduce. Another problem is that while students are listening to the teacher's spoken model, their attention is often focused more on preparing to repeat than on listening. The teacher's sentence consequently serves less as a model for pronunciation than as a starting shot announcing that students should try to speak. The first approach to pronunciation is thus helping students develop the habit of listening carefully before the speak. To do this, the first time you say a word or sentence, ask students to listen just listen. They should not murmur the utterance quietly after you; instead they should concentrate on fixing the sound in their memories. It is

helpful if teacher repeats the model utterance several times before asking students to repeat; this not only allows them more chances to listen but also helps students break the habit of blurting out a response as soon as you finish. Exercises, which require listening but no oral response, may also help sharpen student listening skills. Minimal pair drills are particularly good for helping students learn to hear the difference between similar sounds. Minimal pairs are words that are pronounced exactly the same with the exception of one sound. (Ex: pin-pen, bit-bet) Sample exercise: to help students learn to hear the difference between the short “i” and “e” sounds, ask students to raise their pen when to say the word “pen” and a pin when to say “pin”.

Pronunciation and listening comprehension: as listeners expect spoken English to follow certain patterns of rhythm and intonation, speakers need to employ these patterns to communicate effectively. Similarly, listeners need to know how speech is organized and what patterns of intonation mean in order to interpret speech accurately. Thus, learning about pronunciation develops learners’ abilities to comprehend spoken English.

Pronunciation and spelling: Learning about pronunciation also helps learners with the spelling system of English. Novice learners expect to find a one-to-one correspondence between a sound and its spelling. However, the letter a, for example, can be pronounced five different ways, as these words demonstrate: *same*, *sat*, *father*, *call*, and *about*. Often, a speaker’s difficulties with pronunciation originate from a misinterpretation of the spelling system, rather than difficulty with the pronunciation of the sounds.

A lack of knowledge of pronunciation can even affect reading. Consider the following two examples. First, in a reading text about ranchers, a student understood the word to refer to people who took care of the forests, that is, *rangers*. Here, the mispronunciation of two sounds led to the misidentification of a word. Second, in a cartoon depicting half-dozen cavemen carrying clubs, there was the following caption: “Why don’t we start a club club?” To understand the humor of this cartoon, many people have to say the line out loud, that is, listen to how it sounds to get to the meaning, because visually the duplication of the word *club* can be misleading. Moreover, if you stress the second *club*, the line makes no sense. The stress has to fall on the first *club*, which is where stress falls on compound nouns. (A club club would be a club for people who own clubs)

Pronunciation then is not only important for oral communication, but it is closely linked with listening comprehension, spelling, grammar and reading. To ignore pronunciation is to ignore important information that can support these other skills.

At last I would like to tell short information about language phonetical structure. English language is a language of Great Britain, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

Written English formed on the basis of Latin alphabet. It is 2 main group of English language. British English and American English. London dialect was laid on the basis of national English. Literary pronunciation of Modern English (Received Pronunciation) developed in the phonetical structure of this dialect. In its historical origin this pronunciation called South-English. In present time above 400 million people use English as the first language.

To teach learners English language at first the teacher must love English and attracts learners to this language and respects language. If the teacher is not interested English and process of teaching, the lesson will be boring and waste time. Therefore that the lesson won't be boring the teacher must vary the lesson with different plays, songs, poems, and rhymes that children are interested and gain skills of correct pronunciation. But teaching pronunciation is not easy work. Because the learners differed between each other. Some learners catch the sound easily, some learners can't catch the sound and they pronounce wrongly that sound. That's why the teacher must work with each learner and learners must repeat much time every sound as well as first skills of pronunciation of sounds and words play a great role in forming the speech of learner.

In teaching pronunciation the teacher must have a good working knowledge of the pronunciation of that language. Therefore, in English language teaching, attention should be paid to the teaching of pronunciation throughout all stages. In pronunciation class, it is advisable that the teacher pays more attention areas where the learners are likely to have problems, and plan his teaching strategies accordingly. Above all the teacher must involve the learners in meaningful and communicative activities and make learning as interesting and motivating as possible.

In view of the fact that information about pronunciation supports not only oral language development but also the ability to interpret speech as well as the skills of reading and writing, pronunciation cannot be considered tangential to language learning, it should be treated as an integral part of the entire process. What many teachers have dreaded about pronunciation has been the undue attention to sounds. By attending to the broader features of pronunciation, which have more immediate, discernible effect on communication, teachers will find that teaching pronunciation will be a much more successful and satisfying experience.

LITERATURES

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